E 666
.F35

NATIONALITY versus SECTIONALISM.

AN ESTIMATE OF THE POLITICAL CRISIS,

THE

POLICY OF THE PRESIDENT,

AND THE

ANOMALOUS LEGISLATION OF THE THIRTY-NINTH CONGRESS,

WITH AN

APPEAL TO THE PEOPLE

ON THE

DUTIES AND DANGERS OF THE HOUR.

By J. B. FERGUSON, of Tenn.

Reconciliation, suitable rights to capacity, respect and education to incapacity, are our guarantee for the perpetuation of American freedom.

WASHINGTON, D. C.:
McGILL & WITHEROW, PRINTERS AND STEREOTYPERS
1866.

F606
.F33

ADDRESS.

At a full meeting of the National Union Club of Washington, D. C., on Wednesday, May 1, 1866, Hon. A. W. RANDALL, of Wisconsin, in the Chair, on motion of Hon. GREEN CLAY SMITH, of Kentucky, Dr. J. B. FERGUSON was unanimously requested to address the Club on the questions of the day.

Dr. FERGUSON responded as follows:

The condition of our country and the progress of our time bring home to every reflecting mind consequences that outweigh all our estimates of mere partizan policy and sectional aggrandizement. Our history affords no parallel to the present condition of our land and country. The strife for place, retention of power, and dominant disposal of office and emolument, fade into insignificance before the questions that condition involves. A mighty people in the strength and prestige of unity have asserted in theory and demonstrated by power that no State or number of States can throw off their allegiance to the parent Government. By success of arms and dearly-bought victory they have triumphed signally and effectually over all armed opposition, and thus saved and demonstrated the unity of the nation. Peace has smiled again over the desolate fields, the charred towns, and broken hopes of the misguided, and the prospect of inhabiting anew a common country, with prosperity unequaled and influence unbounded, has renewed its promise and spread wide its hope. With the return of peace, amid the diversity of opinion and interest that must ever characterize a free and powerful people, all sincere lovers of their country and their kind were ready to hail every honest effort on the part of a successful and triumphant government to secure the benefits of an unbroken allegiance even to the withered and the lost. But amid the gratulations of success, and the new enthusiasm of life and hope everywhere jubilant, in the strength and freshness of victory, what do we behold to-day?

Why, sir, we are still in revolution, not to say rebellion, so far as the action of a dominant faction in Congress is concerned, and the country threatened anew with all the dread realities of anarchy, war, and outlawry, in the array of one department of the Government against another, and the attempt to perpetuate alienation and disunion at the very moment we had demonstrated its fallacy in argument, its futility in power.

Rebellion!—there is none in the once insurgent States, but a lawful acquiescence to the authority of the Government. But revolution, the most fatal to human liberty and happiness, in a civil warfare by a disaffected faction against the Government, exists, and we cannot, dare not disguise the fact.

If this be true, it is well to know it, for we cannot shrink from its issues nor evade its consequences. Disrupting agents and agencies of such a character as the present Congress presents are more dangerous to human liberty than the armed hosts upon a field of battle. They seek to defraud an honest and confiding people out of the just meed and rewards of blood-bought victory, and in the same spirit, though more insidious and dastardly than that manifested by armed rebels. The course of the majority in Congress is revolutionary, and we as a people are compelled to meet it or disaster inevitable awaits us. Let us state concisely and plainly the ground on which we make so serious a charge.

The recent war for the Union was waged on the ground that no State can retire from the federal compact or throw off its allegiance. It was successful in the vindication of this

assumption and the maintenance of the integrity of the Union. The insurgents laid down their arms, and the arts and duties of peace were everywhere resumed. The States failing to make effectual their severance, and in failure surrendering all their power as a separate organization against their own life and that of the nation, accepted all the terms a victorious government imposed as the result of war, even to the entire change of their domestic institutions! They gave up their slaves and surrendered their arms. They were invited to revivify the functions of State life and return to the benefits of an allegiance they could not throw off. And what is the result?

They are held to allegiance by the issues of war and denied its privileges and benefits in peace.

What, I ask, is more revolutionary? To declare that a State or States have not the right to dissolve their allegiance, and in holding allegiance are entitled to certain rights and benefits, while they are denied those rights and benefits. In one breath they deny their right to dissolve their allegiance, and then, when allegiance is secured, say they shall not be regarded as entitled to its benefits. And on this inconsistency of claim and denial they demand of those States what is utterly incompatible with the national benefits decreed as common by the Federal Union. Why it is an anomaly in physical law. It takes parts to make a whole. A part lopped off or severed is a destruction of the whole. To say that a part cannot cease to be a part, and demonstrate it by force of arms on a thousand hard fought fields of bloody conflict, and then decree that it shall not have the sustenance or benefit of its being a part, is to say it shall not have the benefit of its own existence. It is revolution; nothing less; and we must meet it, or the grave of humanity will close over us and over the efforts of all past ages to secure individual right and the protection of human action. Most fortunate is it, then, that in a crisis of such fearful meinwe have a President and Cabinet fully alive to the great issues involved and the responsibilities attached. Most provident is it that in Andrew Johnson is blended the elements of the man and statesman. Standing erect in the full dignity of the one, and acting with all the sagacity of the other, the people will see him, in the full magnitude of his office, not shrinking from the issues this congressional faction would force on the country, not evading the duties they make necessary, but boldly and yet considerately marching to the mastery of the ever fatal clamor of faction, and that with the solicitude of a patriot and the will of a hero. A President to be free must be bold. He must be a leader, and not led; he must not hesitate to take the game his enemies and the enemies of the country propose into his own hands, and play it for all it is worth. They have needlessly made the issue. They have despised all the warnings of the past, all the hopes of the present, and made that issue so broad, and the ground so open, it allows of no reconciliation. They have ignored the adage "a small amount of precaution is worth a multitude of efforts after the bird has flown." They have compelled him to interpose between their assumptions of unwarranted and dangerous power and the liberties of this great people. He must turn all the power of his high office and the prerogative of his constitutional authority against the revolutionary and destructive policy they would inaugurate. He must do this, not to destroy their equal rights as citizens, or their endowed rights as members of a great branch of the Government, but that the blessings of liberty may find an abode where wretchedness has been so recently thrust. It is here there can be no compromise. He is clearly right, and right can hold no compromise with wrong. *Rule* or *ruin* was their watch-word. Rule, therefore, to avoid ruin must be his. And the whole element of power that thoughtful and reflective patriots wield whenever our cherished liberties are endangered is coming up to sustain the country's saviour in this the hour of peril. Not alone as a man of firmness and decision—as a statesman of sagacity and wise discrimination—does he stand before us, but as the representative of an indwelling principle that develops in all the sense of justice and the trust of right committed to humanity at large. The nation has passed through a fiery ordeal. The Union survives, and all its parts live to perpetuate its power and benefits. Constitutional liberty has not been overthrown. Republican right—which, in its just definition, is simply *a right to have a right*—lives and shows itself an element of nature that must forever live with the masses. They will sustain it. Our President—their President, vitalized by their life—ever a hero in triumph over the fatal clamor of faction in his entire political career, must and will continue to reflect its ulterior designs. In him concentrates all those elements so essential to the solution of this important problem. Nature's economy never received more inestimable privileges in her inspired soul than at the present time. It is within his province to maintain and perpetuate them. The gleamings are already upon the house-tops of this nation that must inevitably settle her destiny. He was first to catch them, and in their increasing light he is leading it forth from the long night of storm and desolation in which so much was imperiled, so many were bewildered and lost. It is no

mere figure of speech, it is no exaggeration of estimate that I indulge; nay, it is the brightest, calmest, holiest edict of my intuitional nature, confirmed by long and varied observation, that leads me to say the epoch of ages has never rolled together so vast a multitude of events as in my humble judgment are now culminating to destroy the last hope of man for self-adjustment to all that is worthy of the name of government or associated right. And what do I mean by self-adjustment? I mean to say that God, nature, all that is, speaks of man as an identity, an individuality. We, as a people before the world, and against the most powerful forms of adhesiveness, concentration, and despotic power, have demonstrated his right and heritage in self-government. If so; if man is an individuality, a creation, holding his reality and co-relation to all nature, his office is, what?—creative adjustment of all relations, domestic, social, and political. This being undeniably so, we may well pause and ask how far have we, as a people, progressed, attained, developed from the cause that gives life, in order to inherit its benefits? For myself I make answer, however measured that answer must be. We have seen that we cannot be free ourselves only as we give freedom to all whose nature opens to demand and secure its privileges. We cannot give freedom to incapacity, but we can provide for the growth and unfolding of all capacity of all races and conditions committed to our care. We cannot make a child a man, but we can protect his childhood and allow nature in her own time to unfold his manly attributes and power; and, when thus unfolded, we must allow province of action. We cannot with impunity make privileged classes of any division of our own people, no matter how tinted by nature's wise painting, but we can legislate so as to deny justice to none, not even the least. We cannot make a white man a black man, but we can protect the one from the rapacity of the other. We cannot change *the marked differences* of nature, but we can and must adapt our administrative capacity to them, so that instead of being arrayed in hostile and destructive conflict, they may in our system, as in nature's, fill their place and make their contribution to the good of the whole. We cannot deny the rights and benefits of States or parts of our body politic to give benefits or peculiar privilege to men whose color differs from our own, but we can preserve the one and do no injustice to the other.

With these easily recognized facts and principles, do any ask, *Is the President right?* I answer unhesitatingly, yes. Why? Right, it should be remembered, is often a mere conventionality and form, made up to suit the exigencies of passion and party as the fastidiousness of sentiment or circumstances may require. But when we contemplate right, *as denied to none*, we are enabled to consider its significance. Then it is not a mere man or class that determine its bearings and ministration; but a principle that develops Nature, or God if you rather, in man, in the measure of his capacity and opportunity, in unison with the trust committed to humanity. And here it is with pride and pleasure I contemplate our President. He has practically secured freedom to the millions enslaved. He has done this without destroying or paralyzing the arm of power that is a part or portion of the unity of the whole. He has not invaded the constitutional balances of our system of government—not even to secure the natural claims of a hitherto dependent and oppressed race. The strength of our attainment in liberty and right is not sacrificed and destroyed to give right to others. While a benefit is conferred, a greater one is not lost. The negro, in other words, is freed; but States are not destroyed to secure it; the republican form of the national power is not abrogated or made to give place to an assumption of unconstitutional invasion of the rights of States.

Is the President right? He said in the Senate, when it required loyalty to principle and the heroism of manhood, as well as statesmanlike wisdom to say it, that this Union cannot be destroyed, either by secessionism or radicalism. Time has vindicated the truth of the one, and to-day he stands a mighty bulwark of strength, clothed in the panoply of executive prerogative, to demonstrate that radicalism cannot do what secessionism failed to accomplish.

Is he right? Our fathers rebelled from stamp duties and taxation without representation. What is our condition to-day? Tax gatherers are as thick as mile posts on the road to the ruin of those they seek, while representation is denied the exhausted and impoverished people thus taxed! This revolutionary faction at the same time in an anomalous Congress allow no voice from this taxed people to hold in check the rapacious desire of accumulated hatred or misconception that has arisen from circumstances so diverse in their effects, so lamentable in the soluble evidence of a practical solution.

Is he right? This faction has offered to him the bribe—I do not say they intended it as such—of almost unlimited power over the liberties of millions of people, and he has declined; and still they seem not to know that a patriotic President is right in refusing to be, under that disguise, a despotic and unrestricted monarch.

Is he right? The Constitution of the United States says emphatically and explicity: "The Senate of the United States shall be composed of *two Senators from each State, and each Senator shall have one vote.*" Two Senators from my State, duly elected by a loyal legislature are here, have been here from the opening of the session, or the organization of the present Senate.

Are they a part of it? No! Have they a vote? No! Here then is revolution; and the President, who, as Senator resisted secession, as Military Governor fought it and sustained the Government in Tennessee against an armed and powerful foe, now as President of the United States holds in check this direct and palpable violation of that Constitution which alone makes a Senate!

Is he right? He stands for freedom to all of whatever condition or color, and he shows that it is not an impracticable abstraction he means. It is not the denial and desolation of one class that another may be placed in an aristocracy over them. It is not a vain effort to destroy the marked differences of nature. It is simply justice denied to none! There can be no other freedom. Faction, dissatisfaction, caste, color, precedents, power, party may be appealed to, but in the light of truth, of nature, of eternal right, how can a living nation hold its life throes for humanity's good within its grasp in any other way? I ask the sincere lovers of their country of every distinction to pause here, and ask themselves is not the President right, when he seeks justice to the colored, while he does no injustice to the white divisions of our people?

Is he right? Why, if he is sustained in this upright, patriotic, philanthropic course, who does not see that we are on the high road to be as nature, and nature's God designed us, a nation of nations, the culmination of nationalities, powers, and future dispensatories of good to those unborn; while if we must destroy the unity we have kept in so much disastrous peril, we degenerate into little petty States in ceaseless conflict over differences that make us less than men, while as a government we will deserve scarcely a memory amongst the efforts of men for liberty and fraternity.

Is the President right? What war demanded, peace does not demand. What an enemy in armed and serried hosts required at our hands, peace does not require. Then we were compelled, reluctantly it may be said, to meet a foe in the assertion of all the power, influences, and agencies we could command. Its exigencies required, and a true and brave people yielded, what seemed the assumption of unconstitutional and arbitrary measures. These were war. It were folly, nay madness, to temporize in war. But when peace extends her blooming olive, and the hoarse blast of the tempest is heard no more, then if we are equal to nature, if we are men, we will no longer invade the sacred rights of him who was even an enemy Peace requires an end of crimination. We must cease to point South or North. If we continue it, we only prove ourselves a faction; less than a patriotic or manly party—less than men. The President proclaims peace; peace not at the sacrifice of nationality, not in a further invasion upon human rights, or a sacrifice of State allegiance. Peace upon the basis of nature. That while geographical lines may be passed, and even domestic institutions can be changed, we cannot invade natural and guarantied rights in peace; rights that make the unity of our strength, nay the very existence of our nation, merely to gratify the lust for power, and the grasping ambition of the would be gods of an hour.

Is the President right? Let us do justice to all, and we will not fail to see that he is. Many of the children of this Republic, men distinguished for talent, patriotism, and even heroism, whom the nation would delight to honor, have been born not through uniformity of growth and strength, but by powerful radical bias. There has been a class of such radical reformers in every age of the world. There is one in the present. The misfortune is they carry with them their destructive proclivities, and not the constructive ones. The common landmarks kept into their path are those of fire: ruins! Like meteors they plough a single furrow, and are scorched in the flames of their own fierce kindling, dying to consolidate a larger mould. Our President offers that larger mould, and that it may be perpetual, he offers it to all by being *true to all!* God, the great designer, seems to have ordained it and prepared it from the most passion-stained strife. Can we find more honorable employment, more patriotic devotion, or more philanthropic exercise of our powers, than to seek to adapt out national mould to all, so that we may retain our people of every condition and color, and thus secure all the benefits which bounteous nature has committed to our care? And who needs to be told after our sad lesson of war that this can only be done by recognizing the just claims of each part of our common body politic.

Is he right? Why he stands upon the great pedestal of Washington, the Father of his Country, whose memorable warnings span the giant strides of our time, and now bring us to appease the anguish of our souls in our sectional, selfish, not to say hypocritical assump-

tions over the rights and consciences of our neighbors. He stands with all our patriot heroes of the past to withstand every inroad which passion, frenzy, and lust of power make upon the rights of States and the hopes of mankind. And there he will stand, clearly defined—a fixed point against this night of desolation, and from the chaotic ruins of what was once a mighty temple of freedom, he will hold out to all, even the most enslaved and misguided, the outlines of a new national life.

The tendencies of all revolutions bear striking comparison to a person being lost in a wilderness. The objective point in both instances is much further off than we at first imagined. The journey to be made is a laborious one. We solicit all whom we meet for the necessary information guiding us to a certain point, and many whom we do not solicit suggest new roads to us gratuitously. Such is the condition of the faction in Congress. Many plans have been suggested, and received because they were completely bewildered, if not lost. The result is they have no confidence in any, and the people are at last disappointed in their elected guides, and stand aghast at their determination to destroy all the constitutional helps that have carried them thus far on the road. They pass from one point to another, and stop at innumerable intermediates by the way, and when the objective is gained it is no longer familiar to them. Most fortunate is it then, that our great leader saw it distinctly amid all their confusion; pointed it out to all whose eyes were not blinded by the glamour by the way, and now most strenuously will he claim from these madmen, with whom he has to deal, *the fulfillment of the bond!*

It would we well to ask, what do these men propose? As yet, nothing, unless it be to repel rebels from their forum. Hence they ask most vociferously, did men ever hear of equal terms being given to a conquered foe? I answer, nobody ever heard it. Hence rebellions are ever occurring. The cause is never removed. Legal disabilities are ever imposed upon revolutionists in the Old World, and therefore revolutions ever return. What has rebellion cost Russia, Austria, England? What will radical government of rebels cost us? Were it not restrained it would cost us our nationality. We vaunt our superiority to monarchic nations. Never was there a grander opportunity to show it. Sublimely does our President vindicate the principle of reconciliation as superior to revolution, and the world will recognize his full and complete triumph over frenzy and passion.

THE TIRESOME DEBATES AND ANAMOLOUS LEGISLATION IN CONGRESS.

You, sir, and the country must feel the intolerable bore of such lengthy debates upon theories and abstractions, and especially when the nation realizes so unmistakably that its present life chapter is one of *facts*. If we desire to show ourselves patriots and statesmen, why not cease at once to give utterance to those hackneyed criminations and recriminations which are but the outbirth of passion and should have ceased with the war. The political womb of necessity has given birth to an issue that must be practically dealt with and disposed of. Our material estate is an undivided one. Any attempt to despoil American citizenship of its primitive rights under the Constitution amounts simply to gross usurpation, and reverses the action of that broad principle upon which the war for ressoration was successfully prosecuted. Capacity appropriates to itself certain rights and privileges, and if they are not held equal and indivisible the entire structure of nationality is but a fable. If the nature of one State's political relationship with another is such as does not admit of dismemberment at will, it is an insult to common sense to deny privileges accruing from such a forced hospitality. It is not consistent to assume two separate guises: the one as a civilian, the other as some criminal who has forfeited all rights but that of meek endurance to servitude and tyranny.

It is by no means a question of policy, but one of principle, which is presented before the American freemen. The arguments used against those who have been in armed hostility to the Government, and in support of the adoption of those radical measures which; if carried out, would reduce the complexion of State organizatign to mere colonial vassallage, are as inimical to the restoration of peace, as treasonable in design, to the letter and spirit of the Constitution, as the crime it proposes to furnish. If there exist not enough righteous men in Sodom to preserve it from destruction, such miserable political humbuggery cannot be so substituted as to effect its salvation.

We do not derive the elements of Government from the artificial usages of States in their organized capacities. Man never was the product of political necessity, legislative enactment, or State policy. Do not understand this declaration to imply the repudiation of civil conformity necessary to organization and order; but simply as affirming the doctrine of self-government, with a perceptive faculty to appreciate justice and resist usurpation. This is the only cohesive element in American politics to-day. If we do not trust it longer an inevitable dissolution is at hand.

Trace, if you will, the origin of those inevitable political difficulties which have swayed the most powerful dynasties of the world, which have deposed kings, princes and senators, as berries are plucked from their parent stem, and you at once discover the inharmony to have originated in small communities, and incurred by the disregard of some sweeping ordinance, fulminated inimical to Constitutional conditions. While, therefore, I appreciate the offices of government; the propriety of invested authority in a head, and consider it the only practical method for a oneness in nationality and name, our perceptions cannot be so blind as to overlook those palpable outbursts of perversion and misrule that fan the sparks of revolution until their lurid glare and fervent heat dissolve the unitary links of a nation to nothingness and ruin.

When you minister to versatility you cannot totally disregard geographical conditions. A conservative legislation should be evenly exerted upon those who are its recipients, not tempered with extreme laxity or dogmatical coersive method; affirming only those principles of government which clearly declare their intention to serve a whole without detriment to a part. In this manner are general and local interests harmonized.

The mineral resources, serial productions, the immense area of territory, with those undeveloped resources of earth, sea, and forest, all bespeak a varied interest that must call into requisition the talents, energies, and labors of a great people; quickening the revolutions of machinery, vitalizing the brain with progressive ideas and mechanical creations. We have these advantages over all people, and of them we may justly and gratefully boast. Still it requires a most vigilant guardianship of executive power to direct and preserve their greatest culminations. Nominally, only, do they possess features in contradistinction to each other. They must be fed from those native springs of power from whence originally their source was derived, or a conflict is at once inaugurated, the ultimates of which threaten a most disastrous disintegration.

It is impossible to curse and bless in the same breath. We cannot extend the olive branch of peace in one hand, and threaten with the other. The incipient intonations of thunder from such a moving mass of radicalism, with its vituperative eloquence, does not by any means convince us of the necessity of sustaining suicidal measures for the protection of Government against *unarmed* enemies. Such senseless caprices would have their executive agent to issue his proclamations through two separate strains, representing respectively the North and the South. Through the former, incongruous legislation. Through the latter a sirocco of hatred and venom. Our present Executive, however, refuses to take up either one of these strains separately—prefers to speak through them both in the same respiration—hence his tone is national. *He acts for a nation, and not for a section!*

A war of races, Jacobin clubs, and organized bands of assassins, that secrete themselves within the public edifices of the land to smite down those who do not administer freely to partizan zeal, are to be avoided. Such make no suitable shield for the defense and maintenance of American liberty. The earth is already strewn with dead veterans. Let us hallow their resting places by sustaining the principles for which they offered themselves for sacrifice. A house divided against itself cannot stand; and as we all belong to one domestic household, and are quite familiar with each other's disposition, would it not be better to dress old wounds than to open new ones?

The Constitution, as declared by war's ultimatum, does not admit of a divorce upon the ground of incompatibility of temper. Such a decree has for the present decided the question of treason by defeating its organization. Were it brought within the jurisdiction of civil courts, as a case to be prosecuted, and upon which to obtain a decision, it would be found very difficult to *define and suitably punish*. And it must be done by such a process, or the question is buried beneath the irrevocable decrees already passed. The decision of battle is by all means preferable, especially as our public code is at fault in correctly delineating a case never placed upon its dockets in its present guise.

The amnesty offered by President Lincoln; the terms of capitulation upon which General Lee surrendered to General Grant; and the apprehension of Mr. Jefferson Davis, are three political antipodes that involve us in endless argumentation and perplexity. The character of all political movements where their tendencies are revolutionary, are decided in accordance with the number of adherents. At least such has been the case in the present instance. We offered freely national grace and clemency to a legion of traitors—afterwards we gave them liberal terms of surrender. It is, therefore, paradoxical to apply the test to isolated cases. Vindication of national honor has been asserted in triumph of our arms. The attempted dissolution of our Government has been practically decided a failure. Theories are therefore out of season. There is really but one new outbirth or question for settlement before the people. The war has changed slaves into freemen. Many years

elasped from their first importation in this country before they were declared free. The lapse of these years was necessary before the present change in their status could be wrought. They are not an antagonistic element to our domestic economy and peace. They have added to and shared in our agricultural and commercial prosperity of the past; they must contribute to it in the present and future, if higher law legislation will permit them to earn the privileges of suffrage in the same ratio in which they have earned the right of freedom. Withholding none of those gifts which pertain to the elevation of one divine, humanity and broad nationality, we must at the same time preserve a sleepless vigilance by placing competency upon guard that it may defend civil rights without committing political enormities.

WHAT IS A UNITED GOVERNMENT?

The united Government of the United States is an incorporated body of State sovereignties. They are the great arteries that feed the body politic. They possess within themselves the organs and functions of domestic economy and political life. Separate State action is necessary to the reconciliation of those varied interests that affect her internal peace and safety; consummating the great element of some public nationality for which and by whose agency law is executed and private enterprises are protected. There is nothing in this incompatible with the maintenance of beneficial reciprocal relations between these separate republican provinces.

Upon the other hand, all measures tending in the least degree to State disenfranchisement by non-representation in Congress, are not only inimical to public peace, but contrary to a procedure upon which constitutional principles are pledged. War disorganizes, but does not destroy the functions of civil government. It holds in abeyance for the time being, by virtue of its military necessities, the domestic and legal operations otherwise so rigorously exercised. The question under reflection, and upon which is involved a decision of great importance to all intelligent freemen who know their rights and privileges and would dare maintain them, is the present attitude of those States formerly at variance with the Federal Government. Here we have to do with facts and not theories. Physically, morally, and politically considered, we are in possession of all those indispensible requisites essential to the perpetuity of civil legislation, order, and execution. Communities of people retain a sound constituency to principle and idea. By the use of their ballot they select and confirm to office those in whom they confide their trust, making public servants of their neighbors and friends. What more? They conform fully to the conditions of peace by restoring the offices of State to their former organization of judicial power. More than this cannot be done. Were it less than this we need not fear to be regarded as arbitrary and dictatorial in proposing to do it for them.

The physical sinews of war crushed a rebellion. Congress to-day or to-morrow is as capable of protecting itself against the inroads of disloyalty threatening their government as the former. There is not the slightest occasion for any alarm whatever because our southern cousins are disposed to be free-thinkers upon political subjects. Were it not for the partisan leaders in Congress, who are the most successful political alarmists the country has ever produced, I am confident the masses of the people would feel perfectly secure. Our political catechism, like our religious creeds, are, as a matter of course, somewhat varied. Embracing, as it does, all classes and grades of mental organism and political temperament, it could not be otherwise. It may be an erroneous idea on my part to place such high practical estimate upon existing diversities. I consider them an equipoise for the preservation of principle. Centralization of power cannot exist within their atmospheric influence. Oligarchy is brought to sackcloth and ashes whenever a war of ideas is at once thoroughly inaugurated. Extremes, whether developed in climate, soil, latitude, or ideas, are sure indications of a *temperate zone* in existence somewhere. The people from whom the rights of all governments are derived, if they are only true to their *after* convictions, which the maturing hand of time presents before them, smoothing down the asperities of passion and obliterating the localisms of prejudice, eventually realize the truisms of government that ministers to all and proscribes none. Let us, then, trust and be trusted again, should be the theory of the present hour.

The Representative Halls of the nation must resound with the echo of State voices and precepts. These political constellations of American genius and statesmanship must enshrine in radiance the great temple of human liberty. Our productive resources are such as to form the magnet of wealth and enterprise which shall attract the Old World to our shores. Our mechanical skill is such as will maintain the artizans of distant lands. Shall we, at such a moment as this, pause to consider upon the mere *ipse dixit* of political

theorists, the best policy to pursue? We are not only legislating for millions of our own countrymen—but upon the issue as to whether nationality or sectionality gains predominance. The subjects of European rule are in waiting. Diplomacy that shall utterly disregard all personal favors—secular patronage—and avail itself of those virtues employed in the administrations of Washington, Jefferson, and their most worthy colleagues, can be the only dispensing agent of power suitable to the emergencies of the time. Their talents were rendered immortal because their best efforts were exerted for the perpetuation of fraternal feelings between the sections and communities.

We must maintain a union in spirit as well as name. Persecution ever fails to subserve to advantage the dominant party that uses it. The destruction of a social and domestic organization such as that the South possessed under the garb of slavery, has left a gap to be filled up. It must be done judiciously. Public declamation of censure upon its past enormities does not relieve us of the burden of future consequences in this regard. In doing this, no demand is made of us to sacrifice the white man's government for the benefit of the black.

"Necessity," it is said "is the mother of invention." This I accept in its fullest sense, and in addition, proclaim it the common providence and agency for good, that equalizes to a common level, the different grades of obligations and conditions that affect either the public or private states of man, individually; to society, collectively, and to government. Our differences, already, are fast decreasing. Our hope and destiny, which we share in common, bestows an undivided estate. Our methods for determining foregone conclusions on present and future questions, are the most noticeable and radical differences between us. The plans for reconstruction presented, are most prolific. The practical facilities furnished, most meagre. It may be owing to the fact of my not being an expert at this sort of business, that keeps me from appreciating the fact that the Government stands in any particular need of reconstruction; but from the best researches the mind is capable of making through public prints, I have come to the conclusion that the Union was not dissolved either prior to, or at the close of the war, or since its termination. Should this prove to be the case, the doctrine of full representation is the only rational one to be entertained—being firmly convinced that the check-reins of restraint, which are held by virtue of both congressional and executive power, are sufficient at any period of our existence to successfully hold in abeyance acts of disloyalty, whether manifested through southern representation or mere party inclination. It is, therefore, not feasible by the aid of extraneous influences to make the least attempt *to remodel that which is within itself self-correcting.*

THE DUTIES AND DANGERS OF THE HOUR.

One word with regard to the duties and dangers of the hour, upon which the best rhetoric of political alarmists has been so copiously used. The obligations between man and man and man and government are left unimpaired. The war has neither multiplied nor detracted from the nature of those reciprocal pledges which identifies the citizens of a republic with the republic itself. The cause of human liberty, the judicious use of the rights of suffrage, the decision of superior and petty courts, congressional enactments, the veto power of the President, are, in their broadest amplitude, the same as formerly. Appointments to fill civil offices of state by the Executive, with the patronage he holds at his command, are counterbalanced by such measures as are passed by a two-thirds vote of those who represent the expressed wishes of a sound constituency. All vital issues affecting the interests of the country are with the people. There can be nothing outside of them, or not comprised in their judgment or decisions through the ballot. The Jeffersonian doctrine that government is for man, and not man for government, is the only true principle upon which the individual as well as the collective rights of man are justly founded. Tariffs are regulated with the view solely to represent and protect in the best manner possible the interests of home industry and international traffic. A nation's commerce absorbs and attracts the vital energies of the world. It promotes the ends of civilization and friendly intercourse. In this our political duties and purposes are clearly defined, our motives unimpeachable. Our ideas are cosmopolitanized. The work-shops and manufactories of the North, the fertile fields of agriculture in the South, proclaim the productive interests of the country to depend upon the united zeal and action of sectional communities, where there exists no practical inequality, defining political rights. Now, in lieu of this, we are urged to establish such restrictions as shall be instrumental in depressing the energies of a people. In this manner the future blows we would direct against our enemies result in home thrusts at ourselves. Our point of observation should be from past experience; not from the ruling passions of the present. It is not by any means a sure method to enrich

one pocket by robbing the other one of its contents, especially when we are compelled to wear the garment ourselves. The tax upon cotton will become as odious as Hood's cry for beef—the market about as profitable to those interested. If we are not guarded, the official acts of the Government will resolve it into some mighty vampyre, exhausting the living to feed dead interests.

The danger in this present crisis of our national history is in legislating too much. We prune the life out of a young tree frequently to confer upon it imaginary symmetry. We impair a nation's solidity much in the same manner as the refractory rays of heat dissolve a cake of congealed water, by introducing forced issues and projecting foreign elements, and that when neither answers to any extent the purposes for which they were intended.

The nation has survived, through its great carnival of blood, to engage in crusades of ideas. We exult over our possessions of millions of acres awaiting but those periodical tidal streams of imigration that seek an outlet upon our shores. These we welcome, while at the same time it is proposed to exert a political espionage over those who are to the manor born! Domestic and political economy raise up through virtue of its daily necessities the advocates of power to supply its demands. The fears entertained by the radical party in power lest they should be overwhelmed by the toils of their unarmed enemies reminds me of Addison's description of a group of persons entertaining one another upon the subject of ghosts until their hallucinations became frightfully distinct so that they were horrified at their own shadows.

The entire vitality of party radicalism is comprised in the one word—*Reconstruction.* The most imperative plea urged in defense of our national progress and prosperity in the future is that one looking to *complete restoration.* May our reason's deliberate reflections assist us to the consummation of this one purpose. Disloyalty, tending to thwart the common ends of justice and the rights of its citizen dependants, is by no means a prevailing element in the South. Sentiments originate from a common source. The filtering process alone changes their complexion. Invasive policies insult our habits and prejudices. Dictatorial legislation, where it runs directly counter to the fundamental principles of government, is suited for vassals—not freemen!

RADICALISM AN AGITATOR NOT A PACIFIER.

When the mind does not recognize fealty to the usages and conventionalities of society the sentimentalisms of popular sophistry, or even the accepted interpretations of human and Divine law, if it would not incur the penalties and reproaches of those with whom it honestly differs for mere opinion's sake, it must treat them as entitled at least to leniency of judgment and honesty of purpose. I do not admire discursive tactics or vituperative expressions. Either or both defeat the chances of gaining the best conceptions which otherwise might become our possession.

There is a species of *radicalism* plainly and most disgustingly manifested in science, religion, politics, and philosophy, whose proselyting influences are no doubt very great, yet also very destructive to mental vigor and liberal intention. The fact is we need humanizing. A most insufferable degree of pride and selfishness seems everywhere enthroned, and it does not admit of our making neighbors and friends. Every department of humanity was intended for fellowship by nature, but society places them like fossils occupying peculiar strata.

Geology has brought to light the decadence of centuries. Divine thought and mental research must restore that broken link to perfectness connecting the human and Divine government of man. Let us cease playing at hide and seek, then, with our fancies and imagination, and dispell the lingering illusion from our minds that we are making successful inroads upon the economy of Providence. We will ever find upon the first deliberate investigation that not one link in this great chain of cause and effect has been decreased; and the sooner such senseless habits cease the better.

Casualties are panoramic of time's successive days. Their mandates proclaimed through the common agencies of being are stern and inexorable; yet they affect not the harmony or uniformity of purpose of those wise estimates which are the Divine ultimates of eternity. The criminal, only after the stern sentence of the law's extreme penalty has been passed upon him, realizes that what he deemed as cheats practiced upon his fellows were only such upon himself. The Divine code, unlike our moral, possesses more intrinsic value than to be thus depreciated at will. Is not this a very fortunate state of affairs? By this method principle stands vindicated and vice denounced. Grief sounds her requiem of regrets over the dissevered ties of domestic happiness. Joy chaunts its successes in some gladsome life song whose measure is never full. They are as some dissolving agencies of power ever

presenting to our recognition passions checkered waste. In this we have emotional antipodes. Extract, if you will, all that is mediatorial and apply it to governmental legislation, and you will at once cease the most fruitless search man ever made in hope of finding your most devoted landmarks unscorched, or a single household or homestead wherein the children of a common bounty were nourished unchanged.

Legislative exactions begin just where they ought not. They commence at the circumference and approach the centre. In consequence they administer to extremes and operate through extremists. Whereas by reversing the order the result would be very different. Make a plain road as you advance. Trust not to merely blazed timber. Subserve the highest interests of those communities through whose territory you travel, by recognizing common rights that must minister to common ends. The greatest good to the greatest number is a most excellent maxim; I have heard it proclaimed often, but I have seldom seen it practiced, even by those of the diplomatic persuasion.

Would it not be better to cease discussions altogether? What are they but mere passages of wind rushing to fill up some supposed vacuum where none exists, thereby disturbing the loose straws upon some great political floor. Mere superficialities, I assure you.

Human rights have a broad basis, and will ever sustain a free nation of people if they, themselves, will maintain the proper relationship toward the carrying out of its universal and practical interests. When, in the name of common sense and reason, (if you will not think me irreverent in disturbing the memory of such illustrious dead,) will we make an effort to abolish special classifications, and look only to that broad nationality of condition and circumstance, upon which true citizenship has reared its imperishable altar?

What is government but the aggregated intelligence of individuals, who choose to combine their physical force and mental vigor in the establishment of laws and uniform regulations? What is true society but the combination of this same idea, its orbit of action being only more restricted? Why make reciprocity treaties, if mutual benefits are not its purposes? Is not accord desirable in the successful consummation of either private or public enterprises? If it is not so, then are all the experiences of life but a blank, and all our efforts at self-sustenance a most miserable failure? The human voice is a mere hollow echo; the soul but a dry husk; the heart a sealed tomb of sickly sentimentalities. Alas! from the aspect of our unnatural animosities, many would even now surrender hope, who never despaired even in the darkest hour of fatricidal strife, were it not that a superior embodiment attaches itself to that class of unverbal realities, that move a universe to action.

What recks it for me to take a retrospective glance through the fast dissolving eras of the past, if it is not done for the purpose of memorializing some bright, particular epoch amid the checkered waste, that we may cherish it in our memory as something valued, because it has survived the decadences so thickly strewn in its pathway. Such are the expectations of the American people to-day. Their ancestors enjoyed a heritage of principle. Their heart-throbbings were made quick with joy. Privileges were offered never to be forgotten. *A republic was born to them*, under whose enkindling smile of genius, it was destined to restore manhood and statesmanship from the debris of a common ruin in the Old World. A sea of blood has now been crossed. Passion's wild frenzy has ceased its work of mortal immolation upon the field. Must it continue to secretly sharpen its dagger point in the council chambers of the land; and sanctify Grecian sacrifices by rehearsal to appease false honor? A common ruin awaits us if we do not pause.

North, East, West, South are not the mere points of a compass. They are the four primates of principle and power, and demand a common respect. It is these tributary effects of misguided legislation, singling out in the most partizan manner fresh sacrifices to be made, that does with sufficient reason, cause the worst apprehensions to be felt for the issues of the future. Were it but a strife of words, its subtile pulse of mischief could be more easily regulated. *It is a war of organic conditions!* and if persisted in, must prove a whirlpool of destruction.

Commercial enterprises, mercantile pursuits, trade, traffic, and intercourse, in all their varied departments, have their periodical high tides and low tides; yet, in the practical sense, seek a common level. The system of tariffs laid on imports or exports respectively have their advantages and disadvantages. All soberly executed public measures, touching either foreign or domestic relationships, are made both to agree and disagree with the varied interests they are intended to subserve. All this is legitimate, because its general rule of action promotes a healthy tone to objects and things as they exist. If, so to speak, a circulatory sentiment passes current and is made to pervade the marts of civilization and intercourse throughout the world, do we need any "*reconstruction*" in this most excellent method of sociality and political economy? Can civil tribunals, in-

vested with the advantages of high judicial faculties, fail to permeate with their energies the intelligence of a people desirous of self-government, that a quasi military rule must still be perpetuated? Dogmas may, for the time being, perversely seal up from the people's appreciation the existence of the facts, the rights, the interests of communities. But generations unborn to the distempers of such misrule must break up the seal again and scan the outline of such crime-soiled pages as inaction is now writing.

A critical examination into the nature of these present strifes and difficulties cannot fail to result in the conviction that the mark of an oppressor's heel has been left where it ought not. Crimes are punishable, errors correctable. Reparation must be made. The Christian's God is not appeased in blood. Fidelity to early remembrances are not fostered by the mandates of those who are so prodigal of their own rights and destructive to those of others. Should the guiltless only dictate, into what a profound silence would the nation relapse. Should each one of us resolve to expiate his folly, what vast numbers would congregate to partake of such a public sacrament. Virtue, as some fair and etherial nymph called from those grottoes where the brightest hopes of humanity lie buried, would weep over the realizations of such enormities in penitent attitude before her shrine. The measure of justice is not full. Local boundary lines must be covered up. The primeval pathways over which the sainted statesmen of yore carried their heavy burdens of responsibility to public trust and office must be reclaimed to recognition and use. This is the demand upon us. It must be obeyed, or we are lost to honor and the principles of a well-balanced government.

THE LAST APPEAL IS TO THE PEOPLE.

But we must conclude. The 39th session of Congress is about to adjourn. Prior to its convening, war, as some fierce sirocco, had spent its force, after consuming much of the substance of American prosperity. The present moment is pregnant with issues which are directly connected with the constitutional interests of the people; and to whom it stands in the attitude of some common guardian. The conservative estimate of the country looked forward in expectation to the time when American statesmanship and just diplomacy should so direct a nation, in council assembled, as to preclude any further possibility of disaster to the common interests of the people. Has this well-seasoned patience of expectation been rewarded? Has endurance of the past and present state of civil agonies and political uncertainties been justly recompensed? The measured results already brought forward give us a negative answer. The highest prerogatives of citizenship have become as dead ashes in the scales of justice. Two millions of human lives have been sacrificed for the maintenance of a Union in which was involved the recognition of universal rights to a people. What is the sequel to this bloody drama? It has failed in its subsequent intentions! It offers us only restricted legislation! It makes still further demands upon us for the sacrifice of manhood and nationality.

This is no exaggerated sketch of the times in which we live; no political contortion of facts to suit the special purposes of party. We have become enslaved to ideas, and our best thoughts enslaved in the mere expediencies of the hour. *Our desire should be the establishment of a permanent peace.* We desire restoration in fact—not merely in name. The necessities of war acted as some disastrous paralysis upon the body politic. The peaceful pursuits of agriculture lost their supports; and instead of the happy "harvest home" gatherings of yore, upon whose scenes peace and plenty smiled so benignantly, dread carnage was rife; and where the white sails of commerce carried its most substantial greetings, were mighty armaments seeking common destruction. This comes to us as a startling picture of the past: yet, notwithstanding, it bears to us valuable admonitions for a safe guidance in the future.

Have the people become so inert, and their energies so imbecile, as to neglect their duty toward an estate inherited of freemen? It is to their intelligent and just decisions only can we look for a positive good.

The right of the people to peaceably assemble, either for free discussion, redress, or action, cannot be recognised and acted upon at a more opportune moment than the present, when negotiators disagree. The subjects for whose benefit these negotiations are carried on, must of necessity, as protection to themselves, desire such means as shall promote the end contemplated. I say *subjects*, for how otherwise can any man look upon the loyal or once disloyal people of *non*-represented States? Conventions and ballot-boxes are the only true speaking-trumpets with which we can reach the ears of those who would further jeopardize our liberty. The former, as expressive of popular sentiment to measure and principle; the latter as their registered verdict.

The President or Congress must be reconciled to one distinctive rule of action. To

avert anarchy in government we must have but one ruler; and in accordance with American politics this ruler should be chosen by the people. It may be said, in reply, all this has been done. The facts in the case, however, show only a representation in part, and not in full, of the people's wishes in this matter.

If we propose to admit the State of Tennessee into our deliberations and receive it as a political adjunct again, why not all? If all, why not full representation? This glaring inconsistency does not pertain to our national codes. The people of unbiased minds have yet to place it where it properly belongs. It is known only under the phase of radicalism. It pertains, exclusively, to party.

It has been said by some Senator of this same extreme persuasion, that as a nation of people we were largely endowed with religious and moral qualities. I hope, most sincerely, that his researches have been of such a character as to enstamp reliability upon this assumption. In the present crisis, we not only stand in need of the prayers and sincere wishes of all good men and women, but if it were offered us, we would accept of the aid of his persuasive eloquence for the colored race, to ask for a further extension of freedom and representation for the white. While we must fully agree with him in the belief that this is a white man's government, and that it is the wisest and best policy to legislate for *five* instead of *one*, we are, at the same time, somewhat exercised in our minds if he represents his part accurately. And if so, what becomes of all such sentiments, never having seen any such incorporated in his or their public methods of reconstruction?

During the war, moral and religious men asked for peace, and since peace has been vouchsafed, he is still clamorous for reconstruction at the sacrifice of clearly defined right and common human hope.

The present Executive was considered to be a most marvelously proper man by this same moral and religious sentiment, to fill the position of trust under the Government. This belief was generated during the administration of Mr. Lincoln. As military governor of Tennessee he retained his character unimpeached for loyalty to principle and unimpaired in faithfulness to office. His best efforts were exerted, mentally and physically, in behalf of the Government he represented. What are the objections to him as a President? They may be embraced in two sentences: *Opposition to sectionalism! Desire for restoration!*

There are periods in our estate of life, whether acting in a private or official capacity, when our best intentions are misjudged; our most sincere efforts misinterpreted. This is a common experience. The test of appreciation must be subjected to the people. We must make our decision upon two vital points of importance: *Whether we are to have an undivided nationality and representation, or a divided one? Whether a conservative rule of action is to govern and direct our public measures, or sectional fanaticism prevail?* You are affirmatively represented by the President—negatively by Congress.

It is not a mere question involving partisan interests. Upon it depends public security, peace, and the legislation of good to the greatest number. Past differences should be no remaining obstacle to prevent this much desired object. The highest interests of a people are languishing under the present order of necessities in which the whole country is involved.

National greatness, not unlike domestic virtues, is exhibited to its best advantage in the heart and consciences of those upon whom its influences are exerted. The true index to these desirable results is not found in these jarring elements of discord, which have made the walls of Congress resound with the most turbulent evidences of strife. It is but a delusive hope to promise ourselves that the 40th Congress will witness the last great strain in American politics. The present inequality of rights and privileges is not suited for such an agreeable change. Taxation without representation cannot serve as a basis of settlement. Radicalism must meet with a rebuke from the intelligent decision of a people who know their rights and will dare maintain them through proper and peaceable channels.

The northern philanthropist who has devoted his best energies in eulogizing the reticent qualities of the black race for self-government should at once change the complexion of his effusions and minister to the millions of impoverished, unrepresented whites, who claim their homes within the broad domain of national territory. Here true manhood has no place for charity. Its demand is for justice. The same justice which was demanded of King George III. and the acts of a British Parliament in behalf of the colonists. These acts were repugnant to them. They are none the less so to us now.

Formerly the principles of civil and religious liberty were but a conception awaiting a practical experiment. It has been successfully made. Upon its fundamental basis we stand to-day. While we do not question the habiliments of power which clothe a Con-

gress with a right to regulate the precepts of government, we at the same time do not accept its right of unrestricted monopoly.

Rights are vested from the people. It is to the people again our appeal is directed. We stand greatly in need of such an endorsement. The internal direction of affairs thus become self-poised, requiring no extraneous action to justify official acts. Congressional proceedings are only democratic in policy when they represent the entire interests of confederated States. Civil government has been renewed in those States which attempted secession. Simultaneous with it must be a renewed fidelity to its unimpaired obligations. There are no *reserved merits* in the case. It is for us to meet the cognizant facts of the present. Past issues should never survive the necessities which gave them birth.

Believing most sincerely that there is much happiness in store for us as a nation if we are true to ourselves, and that the sires of the revolution created the great fabric of the commonwealth for the elevation of its citizens, and not for their degradation, I await, gentlemen, the progress of events with the same anxiety as a benighted traveler, who has passed through the strifes of the day, and expects to meet the solace of friends, and not the imprecations of enemies.

54 W

WERT
BOOKBINDING
Cranville, IL
Jan Feb 1888